



NEWS RELEASE

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*A copy of this indictment is available to download from the district's Web site at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/news2006/elouerrassi_indictment.pdf*

MOROCCAN NATIONALS, U.S. WOMAN INDICTED FOR MARRIAGE FRAUD, IMMIGRATION VIOLATIONS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that four Moroccan nationals and an American woman have been indicted by a federal grand jury for marriage fraud and immigration violations.

Mohamed Elouerrassi, 54, **Saadia Gourche**, 42, **Fadoua Elouerrassi**, 24, and **Rachid Gourche**, 48, all citizens of Morocco who are residing in Kansas City, Mo., and **Joyce Porter**, 43, of Kansas City, were charged in a seven-count indictment returned under seal by a federal grand jury on Feb. 7, 2006, in Kansas City. That indictment was unsealed and made public upon the arrest and initial court appearance of the defendants.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that all of the co-defendants participated in a conspiracy to commit marriage fraud.

The indictment alleges that **Mohamed Elouerrassi** and **Saadia Gourche** were married in Morocco before coming to the United States, that they are the parents of **Fadoua Elouerrassi**, and that **Mohamed Elouerrassi** and **Saadia Gourche** moved to Kansas City with **Rachid Gourche** (the brother of **Saadia Gourche**) in 1998. According to the indictment, **Mohamed Elouerrassi** was accorded status as a lawful permanent resident of the United States on Jan. 20, 2000, based on his marriage to co-defendant **Porter**, who is a U.S. citizen; **Fadoua Elouerrassi** was accorded status as a lawful permanent resident of the United States on March 20, 2002, based on her marriage to a U.S. citizen; and **Rachid Gourche** was accorded status as a lawful permanent resident of the United States on Feb. 10, 2000, based on his marriage to a U.S. citizen. **Saadia Gourche** allegedly married the brother of the U.S. citizen who married **Rachid Gourche**, but failed to file a Petition to Remove the Conditions On Residence and therefore has

not been accorded status as a lawful permanent resident of the United States based upon her marriage to a U.S. citizen.

The federal indictment alleges that the co-defendants conspired to enter into these marriages for the purpose of evading immigration laws. **Porter** received periodic payments in exchange for entering into marriage with **Mohamed Elouerrassi**, the indictment alleges, but none of the purported spouses actually lived together after their marriages. Instead, the indictment alleges, their goal was to fraudulently establish a legal means through their marriages in which to adjust their status from Moroccan nationals possessing visitor visas to that of United States lawful permanent residents.

Count Two of the federal indictment alleges that **Fadoua Elouerrassi** committed marriage fraud on May 14, 2001.

Count Three of the federal indictment alleges that **Mohamed Elouerrassi** and **Porter** aided and abetted one another in making false statements on an immigration application when they claimed that they were residing together.

Count Four of the federal indictment alleges that **Fadoua Elouerrassi** aided and abetted another person in making false statements on an immigration application when she claimed that she was residing with her husband, a U.S. citizen.

Count Five of the federal indictment alleges that **Fadoua Elouerrassi** made false statements on an immigration application.

Counts Six and Seven of the federal indictment allege that **Rachid Gourche** made false statements on two separate immigration applications.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the indictment are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney William L. Meiners. It was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html